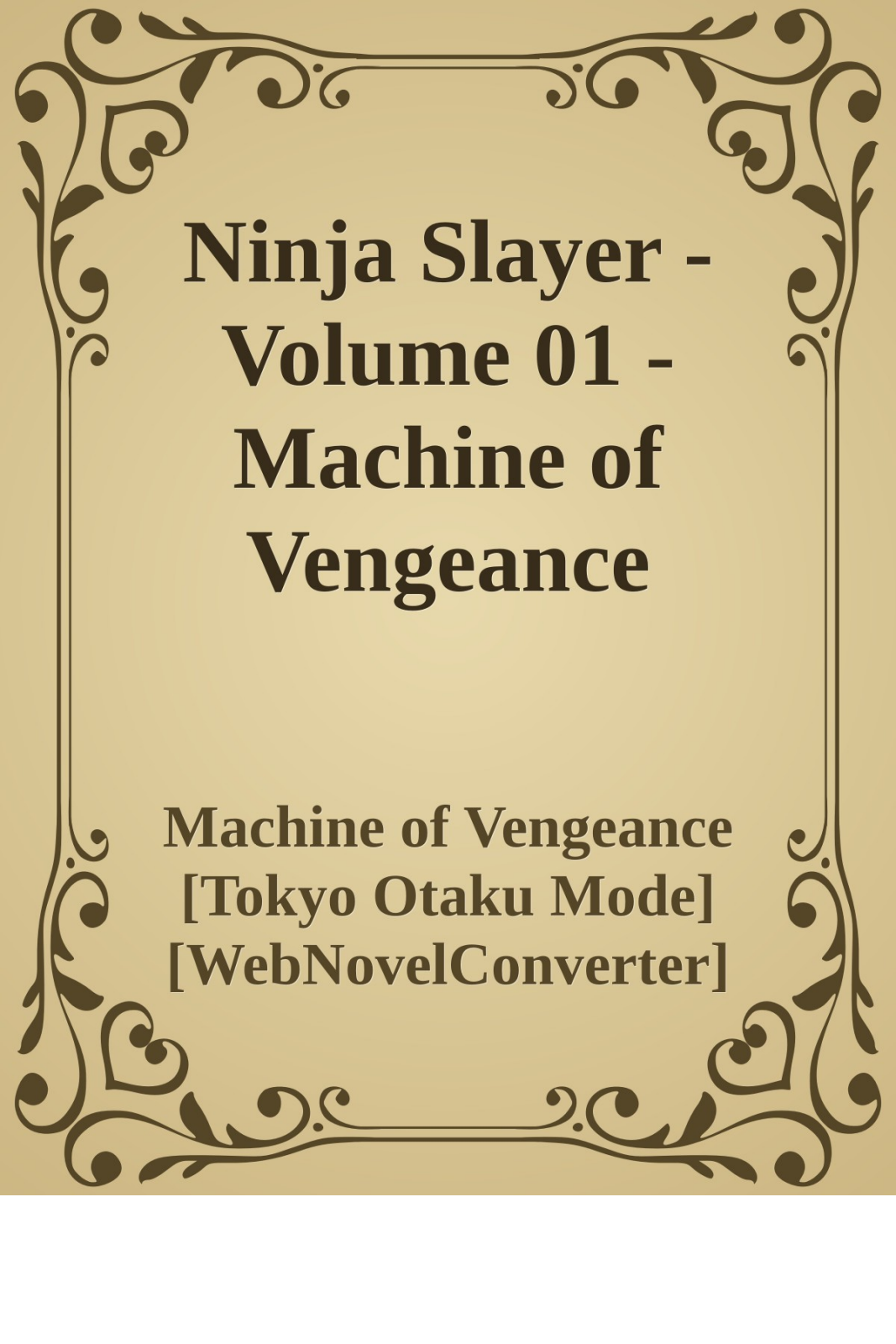


A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns in a dark brown color, framing the central text.

Ninja Slayer - Volume 01 - Machine of Vengeance

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Ninja Slayer - Volume 01 - Machine of Vengeance

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Chapter 01

NINJA SLAYER



Chapter 01

A man peers down lost in thought. Blood drips from both his arms. Most likely bathed in the blood of the five slain men surrounding him. One thing is evident: all five men are dead. Rain polluted by heavy metal washes the murky blood away clean.

Four corpses. Despite the demolished right half of one of their brains, they all looked like quadruplets with the same hair cut, the same face, all wearing the same dark suit; the telltale sign of yakuza clones. As for the other corpse? A ninja dressed in a ninja costume. Standing between the corpses, the figure of the man peering down is a ninja as well.

The whirring sound of an aircraft propulsion system drew near and suddenly the sky became bright. The red ninja glanced up to reveal decadent neon signs in an entertainment district. Beyond the violent, vivid colored signs that read: おなしやす (Onashiyasu), カボス (Kobosu), 良く犬 (Yoku Inu), and コケシマート (Kokeshi Maat), a blimp traversed the skies above. The ninja glared at the airship's steel underbelly.

"Cheap, cheap, actually cheap. We're practically giving it away." While sprinkling the surroundings with words of deception, the advertising airship Maguro Zeppelin projected its searchlight seeking out its target.

"This blimp is for advertising purposes; nothing "fishy" about it." A second later, the ninja leapt high and while kicking a neon sign he scurried up to the roof of a building and kept on truckin'.

Machine of Vengeance

As a man in a trench coat approaches, a smaller man hiding in the shadows of ductwork piping sluggishly gets to his feet. The trench coat man wears a hunting hat low over his eyes so we can't make out his expression. Bringing both his hands together in front of his chest, he greets him saying, "Domo."

The smaller man returns the same exchange of courtesies. "Domo."

Exchange of courtesies or "aisatsu" in Japanese. Since the reign of the Edo Tokugawa, the first shogun, spanning hundreds of years until

now, the value systems of “honor” and “manners” remain unbroken in this Far East high-tech nation-state. The golden rule is: demean yourself, respect others. Here, harmonious accord is highly prized most beyond all things and these exchanges exist even amongst scumbag-loser drug addicts and pushers.

“Dozo. Here you are.” The trench coat man shoves several paper banknotes into the man’s hand. The face of Takeda Shingen is printed on the dead daimyo lord bills.

“Domo, thanks,” he says exchanging the money for a small chartula that he hands over.

“It’s killer. Really killer shit. Mixed with men-tai. It’ll blow your mind. The bio power is the shit.”

The trench coat man busts open the cartridge and shovels all six of the red pills into his mouth munching them down with his gnashing teeth. The rodentesque smaller man screams a martial-arts-movie-haiyah, overexpressing his great surprise. “You’re some daredevil. Did it hit you? Feel it? If you trip too hard, you’re in big trouble. Can you see the Thousand Armed Avalokiteshwara diety? Yabai? You trippin’?”

“Nothing.” The trench coat man replied with an emotionless tone swallowing the pills without water.

The rodent chuckled, “You’re more than a daredevil. The thousand-armed diety is hitting you hard, right? Right?”

“So this is their vein of gold?”

“Huh?” The rat squints.

Then, the trench coat man’s eyes brightly glare!

“Yeeart!” The trench coat man suddenly unleashed a forward kick.

“Aaaargh!” The rat rolls to the asphalt after being kicked in the face! As he falls flat on his face, his front teeth smash and scatter onto the ground.

“Aieeee! Aieeee, you madman!”

In a split second, the trench coat man seizes him by the neck and hoists him up!

“What? What are you doing? Did you overdose? Are you high?”

Rather than replying the trench coat man removes his hunting cap revealing the dark red ninja hood and his menpo, a sinister facial armor metal mask covering everything below his nose!

“The drugs don’t work!”

“Aieeeee!”

The rat wallows, “A ninja? Why a ninja? Are you with the Soukai

Syndicate?”

At the very mention of the Soukai Syndicate, the ninja’s eyes widen. The rat bawls, “Aieeeee! Why’d you come here? I’m always trying my best! Complete transparency in my accounting, no funny business! Eight hours of overtime! I’m actually a blue-chip dealer! This must be a mistake!”

The ninja hoisted the man even higher. How merciless!

“Doing your best? By making more junkies, sucking up their money and forking it over to the Soukai Syndicate?”

“You’re with the Soukai Syndicate, right? A Soukai ninja, right? Why me?”

The ninja ignored the man’s whining. “Now tell me the whereabouts of your men-tai supplier. Answer me or perish!”

“Aieeeee!” The rat refuses. “I don’t know. Of course, I don’t know. Who should I know? The Soukai agent is always a mask guy like you. A ninja. I mean, what’s your game? What are you looking for? Did you have a falling out with your ninja buddies?”

“Yeeart!” Without responding, the ninja hurls the rat to the ground and stands on his back.

“Don’t play dumb with me”

The man screams in pain. “Aieeeee!”

“Do you have any idea of the kind of careful research I did to find you? You think your lip service can fool me? Tell me.”

“If I tell, I’m a dead man! They’ll kill me. Have mercy!”

“There is no mercy.” The ninja tightens up his toes.

“Aieeeee! Aieeeee! I’ll tell you. Aieeeee!”

Amid the darkness at the abandoned Pier 3, rain polluted by heavy metal falls with a staccato beat. Long exposed to the toxic weather, the concrete reminds you of a lotus root eaten away by mice. Then, a black “family” taxi drifts into the scene. Such a “family crest” taxi is the faithful and preferred means of transport serving a certain yakuza family.

Ready and waiting are ten skinhead black yakuza, squared-off as if they’re getting ready to an extra point kick in a football game. Their mysterious clan name 横浜御縄談合 is embroidered in silver kanji characters on their stadium jacket-esque uniforms. They greet the “family” taxi with an unusually risky aura.

Such is the nature of the Yokohama Ropeway Klan, the only yakuza

clan composed of black skinheads. These club wielding, rope lynching, jet ski straddling, tuna fish boat raiding bad boys are a cold-blooded, brutal criminal mob. Before their line of sight, the taxi stops and the door swings open.

The black yakuza gasp. The exiting four men are total quadruplets with the same hair cut, the same face, wearing the same cyber sunglasses and the same dark suits with an identical family crest embroidered in their neckties!

The black yakuza kingpin mutters, “Whasdat...clone yakuza clones?”

The black yakuza exchange helter-skelter glances. They know the score: clone yakuza sharing a syngeneic genotype invented by Yoroshisan Pharmaceuticals. Reports of their practical use had swept the criminal world, but no one had actually seen them in action until now.

The kingpin spits, fearlessly breaks forward and scolds, “Punctuality is supposed to be a Japanese virtue, right?”

“Domo, our apologies!” The four yakuza clones remarked bowing at once. “Domo.”

“Domo.” The black yakuza respond to their exchange of courtesies. Despite the calm-before-the-storm air-of-imminent-assault, yakuza and ninja place a priority on saying hello.

While lowering their heads to bow, the kingpin threatens, “So man... whassup with the men-tai price?”

“We’re raising the going price. Due to the Russian ruble exchange rate.” The yakuza clone coldly blurts.

“Zakkenna-Korah!” The kingpin screams out some yakuza intimidation slang. How scary!

“Teme-Korah! You cocksucker! Bullshit! Total bullshit!” Damn scary! Any law-abiding Neo-Saitama citizen would surely piss his pants.

But the four yakuza clones are simultaneously shaken with defiant chuckling. All at once, they adjust their cyber-shades, turn in sync towards the family taxi and callout in unison. “Sensei, this way.” Yes, there was someone other than the driver still in the car. A thin man dressed in an ash gray suit appears.

He quickly bows. “Domo. Well, Smith-san I presume? Pleased to make your acquaintance. I’m Arson.”

“A pleasure. I’m Smith.” The kingpin returns the bow. “Arson, eh?” He laughs making fun of the man. “Is your name a joke? What’s with your iron mask? You trying to make me laugh?”

“It’s no joke, Smith-san.” Arson nods in assent. “We Soukaiya hate jokes and our new price is serious.”

Kingpin Smith chortles with contempt. Ordering his men with his chin, the baddest mofo of the group steps forward who taunts with a club in his hand.

“I hate jokes too.”

The baddest mofo coercively swings his club.

Smith says with a shrug, “Andre’s an ex-pro baller. Show him what you got.” He grins.

Arson doesn’t bat an eyelash as Andre takes a few practice swings, his bat stopping on a dime right next to Arson’s head. The air pressure from his swing blows past his face!

Andre laughs and takes more practice swings, his bat stopping within a hair of Arson’s head again. The air pressure from his swing blows past his face!

But Arson doesn’t quiver. The yakuza clones remain in control and watch attentively.

The black yakuza gang chuckles with delight. “He’s shaking in his boots!”

The kingpin adds, “Ha-ha-ha! Andre! Go easy on him!”

With a snorting giggle, Andre takes another practice swing. With Andre’s club beside Arson’s head, the black yakuza chortle again. “Yeeart!”

“**Ooooff!?**”

Suddenly, their smiles are frozen in place.

Kingpin Smith mumbles, “Andre?”

Where did Andre’s head go?

Arson exhales a controlled powerful breath. His right leg is motionless, extended straight at a diagonal angle. Standing on one leg and without moving a muscle, Arson scowls at Kingpin Smith.

“Huh?” Smith blinks.

The club falls from Andre’s headless body. Fresh blood spurts out like champagne uncorked from a bottle and he falls in a spread-eagle position.

Kingpin Smith repeats, “Andre?”

Instead of answering, with his leg still high in the air, Arson signals with his chin to the sky above.

As the night sky spins round and round like a baseball catcher chasing after a fly ball, Namu-Amida-Butsu...Oh my Buddha, it’s Andre’s head.

Wising up to the situation, Kingpin Smith trembles. The scene from earlier burnt into his retina, time stamped and imprinted into his memory. That kick. Arson's kick, the one that beheaded Andre. Arson says in a low rumble, "Don't fuck with the Soukai Syndicate. Do you understand that?"

"Aieeee!" Kingpin Smith remarked.

Gripping his machine gun in a rage, one of the black yakuza screams, "Son of a bitch!"

"You idiot. Stop." Smith hurriedly tries to contain him but without consideration for the panic he has caused from the fear, the black yakuza pulls the trigger aiming at Arson. Wild, shooting spree shots ring out from the gun. BRATATATATAT!

Another black yakuza follows suit, grips his machine gun and fires. TATATATAT !

"Yeeart!" Arson evades the gunfire. The bullets don't hit him.

"What the..."

"Yeeart!" Arson slips below the chest of the rapid firing black yakuza and calmly and easily drives a punch into his abdomen.

"Aaaargh!? Ooooff!" The body of the rapid firing yakuza suddenly explodes into flames. DOD: dead on departure.

Namu-Amida-Butsu...Oh my Buddha. What is going on?

Frothing at the mouth, the other black yakuza fires his machine gun, but the bullets don't hit their target!

Arson sneaks under the fire! "Yeeart!"

"Aaaargh!? Ooooff!"

And like before, after being punched in the torso, he goes up in flames and dies!

Namu-Amida-Butsu...Oh my Buddha!

"Aieeee!"

While pissing his pants, Smith plops down on his knees nuzzling his forehead against the pavement. Begging and still wetting his drawers, Smith incoherently mutters over and over, "Ninja. A ninja!"

He scorched a man to ashes with one punch. Only a real ninja can perform such a trick. Only a real ninja has such jitsu.

The other seven follow Smith's lead getting on their hands and knees. And of course, piss their pants as well!

"Is this your sign of allegiance?" Arson tramples on Smith's head without hesitation.

"Yes. We are sorry."

"We all make mistakes. Even ignorant braggarts too big for their

britches. Soukai ninja are no bluff. We actually exist. You had to learn that the hard way, right?”

“Yes. We are sorry.”

“I look forward to your continued cooperation, Smith-san.”

“Yes. We are sorry.”

And that was that. Arson and the four yakuza clones somberly board their family taxi.

The driver mutters in a contained tone, “At your service.”

Arson sinks into the rear seat and solemnly says, “Take me to the Tokorozawa Pillar.”

“My pleasure.” The driver mutters back with reserve and drives off.

Arson gazes intently at the driver’s reflected image in the rear-view mirror.

The driver wears a hat low over his eyes and grips the steering wheel in a matter-of-fact manner.

Arson asks, “Did you change shifts? You’re not the same driver as last week”

“No, I’m not. Kameji-san retired.”

“I see.”

“Yes, he did.” The driver replied flipping the turn signal and steering the taxi towards town.

Arson accuses, “Driver, this is the wrong route. You idiot.”

“Sorry, sir.” The driver apologizes in a detached tone. “But this route will get you to where you’re going.”

“What?”

“You’re not going to the Tokorozawa Pillar,” replies the driver.

Arson squints and pleads, “I’m not?” The atmosphere in the car goes from bad to worse.

The driver mutters in an emotionless tone, “You’re going to hell.”

Through the rear-view mirror, Arson zones in on the driver’s eyes.

“What did you say?”

“Ninja.” The bottom of the driver’s mask shines in the light from the passing neon signs.

“Ninja shall perish.”

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Chapter 02

NINJA SLAYER

Machine of Vengeance

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Along with the driver's hellish declaration, the family crest taxi accelerates to light speed. This black cannonball headed for hell morphs into a coffinesque hearse. Racing over 200 kilometers per hour, the hearse slashes through the city. And what's directly ahead is the Okame Arms building. Namusan...Buddha!

Incidentally, the Soukai Syndicate purchased this building in a property flip scam buying and selling the real estate back and forth over and over to drive up land prices. In reality, the building is uninhabited.

"What? What are you doing?" Arson is flustered. Ninja or not, this situation was not foreseen.

"Zakkenna-Korah!" The yakuza clone in the front passenger seat shoves the chaka-pistol that he's packing at the driver.

"Yeeart!"

"Aaaargh!"

With one hand, the driver severs the yakuza clone's wrist in a flash.

"You're roadkill now!" The driver bluntly speaks as the yakuza clone tumbles out the open door of the speeding taxi. He cleverly falls safely on the asphalt and lands on his knees unharmed.

The stampeding family taxi heads on a suicide bombing of the Omega Arms building.

Witnessing the whole thing, a drunken salaryman shrieks, "Aieeee!" He then runs away.

KABOOM! The taxi smashes through the front entrance of the building. Unable to endure this massive collision impact, the building collapses. Maybe this structure was jerry-built like all yakuza constructed buildings?

All five men left in the car are DOD...Nay!

Right before impact, the men tumbled to safety.

"Yeeart!" Arson does a cartwheel and then a backflip as he lands safely. Then the four yakuza clones follow suit doing the exact same moves. They all stand up at once.

"Who sent you, assassin?" Arson rushes forward. **BOOM!**

With everything behind his back bursting into flames, the yakuza

clones already stand with their assault rifles and chaka-pistols in their hands.

“Zakkenna-Korah!” A barrage of gunfire erupts at once.

The driver rises to his full height. Amid the storm of whistling bullets, the driver’s hat gets shot to smithereens.

What emerges from the tattered uniform is...a dark red ninja in full costume!

GOURANGA! A ninja! Suited up and suitably unharmed as well.

“Ninja?” Arson frowns.

Arson peels off his gray suit. In an instant, he transforms into a dark orange ninja costume. The two ninja face off.

“Domo. Pleased to make your acquaintance. I’m Ninja Slayer.” He beats Arson to the punch clasping his hands together and bowing. “Ninja Slayer, you claim? How dare you utter those words?” Arson’s eyes grow wide. Then he bows back. “Domo, Ninja Slayer-san. I’m Arson.”

A seething thirst for blood swells between them. Of course, once the pleasantries of proper greetings are swiftly dealt with, a cruel, bloody battle to the death will soon follow. However, this exchange of *aisatsu* cannot be neglected. It’s simply plain, proper ninja etiquette. Thus it is written in the Record of Ancient Matters.

The yakuza clones already have Ninja Slayer in their sights ready to fire, but Arson won’t allow it.

“I never believed...you existed. A born loser like you and your trumped-up story about dead to rights means.” Arson chortled. Assuming a *jujitsu* stance, Ninja Slayer cautioned. “Rest at ease. There’s no need to consider how your end justifies my means. I’ll break your karate and send you off to *jigoku-hell*.”

Neon light shines from the two Japanese characters: *nin* (covert) and *satsu* (slayer). And in a fear-instilling-font!

“Ninja shall perish.” In a voice that sounded like the Grim Reaper himself, Ninja Slayer handed down a death sentence.

“Don’t whine!” Arson challenged.

“Yeeart!” While zigzagging, he raised his fists and unleashes a dash straight.

Arson’s very name hinted to the fact that his forte is a sect of *Katon-jitsu* or *inferno* style technique. This inhumane assassination technique involves mastering *pyrokinesis* to burn your opponent to death via the supernatural phenomenon of spontaneous combustion. Arson had

complete confidence in his ability.

“Ninja Slayer? What a ridiculous name! Exterminating a vermin pest like you should help out your next home appraisal.”

Arson thrusts out his fists.

“Yeeart!” Such speed! A lightening fist of fury! But Ninja Slayer’s form is nowhere to be found!

“What?” Arson gasped.

Ninja Slayer flips over into a back bridge evasion move. What ninja agility. This faint was just the beginning. Ninja Slayer’s legs blur from spinning so fast.

“Yeeart!”

“Aaaargh!” While performing a headstand, Ninja Slayer twists both his legs like a helicopter and diagonally kicks Arson in the jaw. He spins around like a drill boring a hole sending Arson flying.

“Zakkenna-Korah! Motherfucker!” Without a moment's delay, four yakuza clones open fire on Ninja Slayer!

“Yeeart!”

“Aaaargh!” In that instant, for some reason one of the yakuza clones takes a shot to the head and dies.

Namusen...Buddha. Ninja Slayers whirlwind spinning kick deflected the bullets into the nearby head of one of them.

“Aaaargh!” Another one keels over dead. At first glance, it would appear that a ninja throwing star aka shuriken is sticking out of his cranium.

But in a strict sense, what was thrown was not a shuriken but a suriken, a demi-shuriken conjured by a greater ninja’s karate, blood and heavy metal particles floating in the atmosphere.

While seemingly occupied with kicking, Ninja Slayer was able to conjure and throw this demi-shuriken.

“Zakkenna-Korah!”

“Yeeart!”

“Ooooff!?” Just as the yakuza clone went to change the ammo cartridge on his rifle, his neck suddenly arched at an unnatural angle and he fell over dead. In that instant, Ninja Slayer who had slide under his torso, chops his spine in two.

The last standing yakuza clones screams, “I’ll kill you!”

“Yeeart!”

“Ooooff!?” Before the final yakuza clone could do anything, an elbow blow smashed his right cheek to bits. One more yakuza clone was now dead.

“No. No way!” Arson groans getting to his feet. “Who are you? What are you after?”

Ninja Slayer briskly walks closer. “Soukai ninja like you don’t deserve to live!”

Arson retorts, “Rescue is on the way here! Do you think they’ll allow this? You terrorist, you’ll be the one to die!”

“Ninja shall perish!”

“Yeeart!”

Arson is wounded but keeps punching in desperation. Ninja Slayer parries his attack barely moving his left hand. Arson misses. His katon-jitsu is useless.

“Yeeart!”

“Aaaargh!” Arson’s body breaks and trembles. “Aaaargh! **Ooooff!?**”

From Arson’s slouched back – Namu-Amida-Butsu...Oh my Buddha – Ninja Slayer’s arm is sticking out. A thrusting hellish chop pokes daylight into Arson’s torso.

“It’s true. Aaargh.” Blood overflows from the breathing holes in Arson’s ninja mask. “Rescue is heading to this location.”

“You really know how to make a ninja’s day.” Ninja Slayer remarked.

“Even if you avoid them,” Arson went on, “stronger ninja warriors and Darkninja surely won’t permit your existence.”

“I won’t let you exist either.” Ninja Slayer uncorked his arm from inside Arson’s back. “Yeeart!”

“**Ooooff!?**”

At Ninja Slayer’s feet lay the bodies of five enemies who already died cruel deaths. Ninja Slayer merely peers down with expressionless eyes, as if to say he’s seen this kind of dying too many times before. The battle concluded like wildfire.

Behold! There was no dishonesty in Arson’s words.

The whirring sound of an aircraft propulsion system drew near and suddenly the sky grew bright. Ninja Slayer glanced up to reveal decadent neon signs in an entertainment district. Beyond the violent, vivid colored signs that read: おなしやす (Onashiyasu), カボス (Kobosu), 良く犬 (Yoku Inu), and コケシマート (Kokeshi Maat), a blimp traversed the skies above. Ninja Slayer glared at the airship’s steel underbelly.

“Cheap, cheap, actually cheap. We’re practically giving it away. This blimp is for advertising purposes; nothing “fishy” about it.” While sprinkling the area with words of deception, the advertising airship Maguro Zeppelin projected its searchlight seeking out its target. A second later, the ninja leapt high and while kicking a neon sign he

scurried up to the roof of a building and kept on truckin’.

The airship cut through the night sky making an unsettling sound. Laser beams fill in the gaps as Ninja Slayer runs at full speed. *BOOM!* As the airship bombards Ninja Slayer detonation blasts reverberate. Counter-ninja fire rains down. Ninja Slayer performs another back bridge evasion move. The spot on the roof where he was standing a mere second ago explodes into pieces.

Namusan! Buddha! If the truth must be known, the Soukai Syndicate has dispatched this counter-ninja airship. Their enemy flight control command center located at their headquarters in the Tokorozawa Pillar quickly responded to Arson’s IRC distress call. The weapon system camouflaged as this Maguro Zeppelin cruises the skies above. Behold! The tuna exterior deploys and transforms into battle mode.

“This blimp is for advertising purposes; nothing “fishy” about it. Our demon-stration focuses on reliability and doubles advertising effectiveness.”

The deceitful maiko apprentice geisha announcer’s voice blares out from the speakers.

And appearing below the tuna exterior is...*GOURANGA!* The airship morphs into a ferocious demon gargoyle. How scary!

The treachery on the speakers continues, “Double ad results with explosions!”

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Chapter 03

NINJA SLAYER

Machine of Vengeance

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The Tokorozawa Pillar Castle Tower

The time at the tone is the witching hour. Off in the distance, the jewelry box-esque home of a greedy Buddha in all its beauty of seven prismatic colors stands out from the darkness. The lumen glow of this illusionary beauty in actuality is made possible by tired laborers who work through the night. Here only the ruling class is allowed to enjoy the beauty of the night skies from high above. Namely men like him.

He alone -- the owner of the Nekosogi Fund, the head honcho of the Soukai Syndicate -- relaxes with a wine glass in hand on this tatami throne residing in the Tokorozawa Pillar. This man is Laomoto Khan. Wearing an Armani suit, a gold ninja mask and coif, tonight like any other night, he sits with four blonde oiran courtesans who lay in waiting around his throne.

As he brings his wine glass to his lips, the sophisticated sensor on his gold menpo activates and the mask opens automatically. One of the oiran courtesans draped over his knee, opens her obscene kimono flashing organic grapes wedged between her voluptuous watermelons. Khan grabs one and places the grape in her juicy lips.

The oiran nimbly peels the grape with her lips. Exposing the fruit inside, she places the grape on her tongue and serves it to Laomoto who laughs, “Mu-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!” He nips it away with delight swallowing it with some wine. He then spies the ultra-thin LCD monitor at his fingertips. In-flight visuals appear on the screen.

“Good day, Laomoto-san.” Captain Kinjima wrapped in an imposing and overdone high altitude protective suit bows respectfully on the other side of the monitor screen. A god of thunder emblem symbolizing Omura Industries is on his helmet.

Omura Industries, an underworld mega-corporation, holds a monopoly in the field of heavy industries in Japan. Their connection with the Soukai Syndicate runs deep. The two are as thick as thieves.

“We have detected the existence of a counter-ninja.” Kinjima said.
“Nicely done.” Laomoto nodded.

A figure down on one knee is diagonally behind Kinjima: a ninja. The

ninja wears an aviation helmet in addition to his ninja mask with the Omura Industries logo on his forehead. The ninja doesn't quiver.

"I am thrilled to present to you the massive firepower of our company's battle demon gargoyles airship, the Bubujima." The captain flattered.

"We would like to invite you to witness first hand its impressive combat capability on this night of nights and urge the police for official deployment."

"You insolent."

"Aiee!?"

After being given a good scolding via the monitor, the captain goes into convulsions from the fear. And without a doubt, he's most likely pissing his spacesuit.

Laomoto scolded. "That's some sideshow. Who said you could talk about business? I'll discuss business when I want to discuss business." "Absolutely. You're absolutely right." The captain jumped down from his cockpit seat getting down on his hands and knees.

Laomoto, however, paid no mind to the captain's desperate pleas. He gulped down his wine and wedged the empty glass between the oiran's porcelain breasts staining them with purple juice from the smashed grapes.

Laomoto signals with his hand to the remaining three oiran to get it on. They giggle and begin caressing each other.

"Well, show me how your little toy works. Delight me to my heart's content." Laomoto decadently toyed paying no mind to the monitor. He grabbed some organic sushi perfectly positioned on a multi-tiered food box placed at just the right height from the arm of his throne. Some beautifully marbled fatty tuna sushi. He devoured two pieces at once.

The laser scanning optical system scans the streets once again. While Ninja Slayer springs from building to building, the lasers steadily close the distance on him.

With the demon gargoyles zeppelin soaring very high above, what is Ninja Slayer going to do? Then, once again, the counter-ninja cannons fire. BOOM!

He manages to evade them by the skin of his teeth.

Another type of laser combs the perimeter. Several seconds later, as the missiles lock-on target, the identity of the laser is now evident.

From the demon gargoyle zeppelin, four missiles fire at once. Leaving white tracers in the night sky, the missiles pour in towards Ninja Slayer.

“Yeeart!” Ninja Slayer does a tailspin evasion jump.

KABOOM! KABOOM! KABOOM! KABOOM!

Five frames later, the missiles self-destruct in succession. While in his tailspin, Ninja Slayer shot down all of the missiles by throwing target intercept ninja stars.

With his ninja kinetic visual acuity, swatting down a tracking missile moving at normal speed is child’s play compared to zeroing in on a mosquito.

“Yeeart!” He lets out another round of throwing stars. CHIN! CHIN-CHIN!

Sparks faintly glimmer high above and the sound of metal smashing is heard. His suriken make a direct hit on the airship. BOOM!

A counter-ninja cannon fires!

“Yeeart!” Namusan! Right after Ninja Slayer jumps, the building explodes into bits!

“Yeeart! Yeeart! Yeeart! Yeeart!” While doing another aerial whirlwind twist, Ninja Slayer lets off a burst of rapid-fire throwing stars. The demon gargoyle zeppelin sparkles with flames as the stars impact. The airship precariously starts to rock. The demi-shuriken stars that Ninja Slayer throws aren’t mere slingshot pebbles mind you.

“Aieeee!”

The captain glared at his instrument panel with surprise. “What, what on earth?”

“Are you going to allow this counterattack?” Laomoto chimed into the monitor. “With all your firepower onboard, can’t you defeat one rogue ninja? Is he beyond your control, Omura-san?”

“No! This is mere prototype! Everything is dandy.”

“My patience is gradually wearing thin, Omura-san.”

“Aieeee!?”

With the oiran on his lap, Laomoto yawned as he fondled her set of plump knockers. The other three oiran try to get his attention by breathing heavily in unison and fondling each other.

“Engage!” The captain orders his ninja behind him.

“Roger. My pleasure.” The Omura Ninja nimbly got to his feet and exited the engine room door with incredible speed.

“Laomoto-san!” The captain called as if he’s holding down the fort.
“This might be the perfect chance for a presentation on our company’s ninja capabilities. I mean, but not as any formal business, you know.”
“Do whatever you want. Just kill the enemy!”
“Aieeee!”

Even now and even in the distance, we witness several billows of black smoke pouring out of the demon gargoyle zeppelin which regains its balance every now and again. While leaping from building to building, just how many tens of hundreds of ninja stars had he thrown? And there’s no end in sight to his flash of lightening momentum.

“Yeeart! Yeeart! Yeeart! Yeeart!”

CHIN! CHIN-CHIN! Sparks scatter once again. Flames erupt near the engine.

But just then, something ejects from the airship and hones in fast on Ninja Slayer rotating like a hummingbird.

Namusan! That’s not a machine; that’s a ninja! And this ninja is wearing a jet rocket pack on his back.

Hovering within clinging distance, this new foe exchanges courtesies with Ninja Slayer as proper ninja etiquette dictates.

“Domo. I’m Cloud Buster!”

Flames spew out of his jet pack. While running around, Ninja Slayer brings both hands together to return the greeting.

“Pleased to make your acquaintance. I’m Ninja Slayer. Come at me with as many ninja as you like. The result spells the same: your ruin.”

“Pride cometh before the fall!” Cloud Buster skillfully jets and coils around Ninja Slayer pulling out his weapon of choice.

A baton? A hooked truncheon? Nay, it’s an electromagnetic blade – the latest technology from Omura Industries – capable of discharging fierce voltage.

Ninja or not, if repeatedly hit enough times by that, his internal organs will fry and he’ll soon perish.

“Yeeart!”

“Yeeart!”

Ninja Slayer unleashed a chop to assault this weapon. The two attacks collide.

“Aaaargh!” The electromagnetic blade sparks and crackles. In agony, Ninja Slayer assumes a defensive position. Smoke rises up from his wrist cuffs.

“At Omura Industries, this is what we call science! Our industry is your victory!” Cloud Buster blurted out company propaganda like a programmed robot.

“Yeeart!” The electromagnetic blade made its second attack.

Ninja Slayer’s guard is in danger.

“Yeeart!” Ninja Slayer evades the attack with a fluent body bridge retreat.

But without a moment’s delay, the laser beams are already tracking his movements. SWOOSH!

BOOM! Counter-ninja missiles fire from the demon gargoyle zeppelin. By the skin of his teeth, Ninja Slayer performs back handsprings over and over again to evade the impending danger.

“Industry!” Cloud Buster slashes from the sky above.

Ninja Slayer evades his attack via back handsprings.

With unrelenting power to spare, the electromagnetic blade mercilessly destroys an electrical fukusuke good luck doll.

Ninja Slayer jumps from a water tower to a lightening rod and then finally to some power lines which he rides like a pro surfer.

CH-TICK-CH-TICK! The relentless laser scanning beams target from above.

While sliding down the power lines, Ninja Slayer glares at the zeppelin.

Four missiles come flying his direction at once.

“Yeeart! Yeeart! Yeeart!” Ninja Slayer counterattacks with throwing stars.

“Industry!” Namusan. Cloud Buster foils his attack.

“Yeeart!”

“Aaaargh!” Ninja Slayer promptly dropkicked Cloud Buster in his torso and jumped back out of the way.

But a building conveniently located behind him is nowhere to be found for his triangular jump retreat.

He clings to an oblong neon sign that reads: got stiff shoulders. A tracking missile approaches. He neglected to shoot them all down.

Ninja Slayer tries leaping up the side of the building by grabbing the sign with all his might.

“Industry!” Cloud Buster jetted down and sliced the sign with his blade.

“Aaaargh!?” Ninja Slayer gets shocked along with the sign.

Right after Cloud Buster’s hit-and-away move, he flies off and the missile impacts.

KABOOM! Neon glass shatters as the supporting strut gives way. Ninja Slayer plummets to the roadside along with the sign. Cloud Buster circled him in the air. “The combined power of Omura Industries science and ninja karate is what won the battle!” He mutters with satisfaction and gives a thumbs-up sign to the zeppelin. Namu-Amida-Butsu...Oh my Buddha!

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Chapter 04

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“Mu-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! Mu-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! ” Laomoto laughed to his heart’s content. At his feet, one of the oiran climaxed alone. Then, the three oiran wrapped in each other’s arms followed suit reaching orgasm nearby.

“You made my day, Omura-san. Your company’s what’s-his-face ninja runs like a dream.”

“I’m most grateful.”

As Laomoto annoyingly signaled with his hand, the oiran courtesans straightened up their indecent, undone kimonos and rushed out of the room with indecent haste. On the other side of the monitor, the captain repeatedly bowed down on his knees.

“I’m most grateful. Most grateful. Midway was a little touch-and-go but ---.” His words were broadcast with crackling static as the monitor visuals cut in and out due to the severe damage from the throwing star attacks.

“Recover the body,” Laomoto commanded with haughty arrogance.

“How dare that vermin defy the Syndicate. Investigate his body with fine-toothed comb.”

“My pleasure. I’ll alert our company ninja now.”

Laomoto controlled the deck next to the monitor revealing a lavish body sushi feast with several new oiran as the main course. The night was still young as the Khan’s banquet of debauchery kicked into high gear.

Like a bio-starfish sunken in the abyssal plain, Ninja Slayer’s murky, mano-vijnana conscious floated helplessly amid the neuron darkness. The damage suffered in the explosion and the fall had been great. How careless he had been. Had his weak enemy been more formidable than he thought? Had he bitten off more than he could chew? Were the series of battles the cause of his chaotic concentration?

“What a pathetic man. Actually, pathetic.” A half-stunned and half-mocking crumpled inner voice criticizes Ninja Slayer. “I had higher aspirations for you, Fujikido.”

Fujikido: Ninja Slayer’s actual name. And with that, he raised himself

up. An evil presence stood by his side.

“When you keep company with apathetic pleasures like civilization, this is what happens in the end.”

“Silence!” Fujikido scorned.

But the evil being lingering about his neurons laughed in amusement.

“With my true karate, you’ll never lag behind a crane fly like that.

That...BWU-HU-HU-HA-HA, lesser ninja’s soul source is below the Anthophila ninja clan.

He’s a mere insect in the karmic cycle of life actually.”

“Quiet, you apparition. I can still go on. Let me do it.”

“What, boy? Say that again.”

“Ninja shall perish! That ninja will.”

“Yes indeed, Fujikido. So be it.” The sinister voiced agreed.

“Ninja shall perish. All ninja shall perish.”

“Ninja shall perish!”

“In that case, lend me your body, boy.”

“No!” Fujikido objected. The wicked apparition laughed.

“Good. Sleep there, Fujikido. You’re actually at your wits end. Let me be your guide. Let me show you the way.”

“Don’t! But...I still want to kill ninja.”

“Precisely. So the question answers itself, does it not?”

“Ninja shall perish!” As his conscious melted away, Fujikido succumbed. Murderous intent was all that remained.

“Yeeart!”

“What!” Peering down at the rubble from the sky, Cloud Buster fires up his jet pack going into full-alert mode as he climbs away at a diagonal angle.

This kind of ninja discernment is what saved him from danger, for soon after Ninja Slayer jumped vertically and delivered an ominous right hand chop. A second earlier and Cloud Buster would have been on the verge of decapitation!

Caught in the middle of a rock and roll ninja attack, Cloud Buster was thunderstruck. “That does not compute! Death was the only possible outcome!”

“Yeeart!” Ninja Slayer rolled round and round in the sky and landed a roundhouse kick in Cloud Buster’s excuse for an OS.

“Aaaargh!?” Cloud Buster went flying! And not with his jet pack mind you.

Ninja Slayer does a loop-the-loop backwards somersault, kicks off a building and jumps away!

“I-industry!” Recovering with a jet pack blast, Cloud Buster intercepts with his electromagnetic blade. “Yeeart!”

“Yeeart!” Ninja Slayer reels out a backfist and parries the attack with his manifer gauntlet covering the back of his hand! The blade sparks and crackles with electricity. But Ninja Slayer takes no heed!

“Oh no!”

“You toy robot!” Ninja Slayer sneered. The glint in his eyes glowed like a morning glory sparkler. An afterimage of the witching hour is imprinted in his brain.

Cloud Busters circuits overload with a hiss. “The electrical charge surely passed through him. Why? My weapon of modern civilization should have...”

From the force of his backhand blow, Ninja Slayer rolls sideways in the air. He deals another deadly roundhouse kick screaming, “Yeeart!”

“Aaaargh!” From the force of the fierce kick, Cloud Buster’s body doglegs and he’s blow back. Vomit seeps from the exhaust vent in his menpo. Unable to retrofire in time, his back smashes into the wall of a building.

“Yeeart!” Ninja Slayer rolls sideways again from the force of his kick. He flings a rope.

At the other end of the rope, Cloud Buster’s sharp, heavy claws are bound tight. He’s tied at the nape of his neck like a counterweight. “Aaaargh!?”

Ninja Slayer roars with laughter. In mid-air, he pulls with all his might, wrapping the rope tighter and tighter around Cloud Buster’s neck.

“Aaaargh!?” Cloud Buster is frantic and fully throttles his jet pack. He makes a half-crazed vertical ascent.

Cloud Buster gyrates at high speed in the night sky. The rope around his neck stretches into bridle reins, which Ninja Slayer now clenches. Alas! Behold this nightmare on ninja street!

“Well? How do you like me now? *WHA-HA-HA-HA.*” With no regard for this extreme danger, Ninja Slayer happily hurls sinister snickers and evil guffaws at Cloud Buster from the bottom of his possessed soul.

A half-crazed Cloud Buster recklessly takes flight screaming, “A-aaargh!”

While being pulled into space, Ninja Slayer applies delicate force with both hands tormenting Cloud Buster as he steers their flight. And now, right in Cloud Buster's flight path is...Namusan! The demon gargoyle zeppelin!

"Aa...Aa...Aaargh!" *KRAAAAASH!* Cloud Buster batters through the armor of the demon gargoyle zeppelin and plunges into the engine bay.

"Wasshoi!" Pulled by the reins into the airship, Ninja Slayer lets go of the rope and rolls on the floor.

"A-aaargh!" The forward propulsion from Cloud Buster's jet pack sends him throw the roof and soaring in the night sky.

"A-aaargh! See you in hell!" Ninja Slayer sneered!

Reduced to a fireball, Cloud Buster now crazily sputters in the night sky at random vectors. "Aaah! Aah! Sayonara!"

Then like fireworks Cloud Buster scattered everywhither till kingdom come. Oh my Buddha!

"Enjoy your flight you scrap iron, incompetent show off! Your morsel of karate was of little sustenance!" Ninja Slayer hurls abuse lashing out at the now deceased Cloud Buster. Ninja Slayer doesn't take shit from nobody!

"Aiieee!?" Already fighting an uphill battle trying to steer the blazing airship while unable to decide if they should bailout due to Laomoto watching on the monitor, the flight operators completely surrender and fall into a panic from the impact and Ninja Slayer's entry. While pissing their flight suits, the flight crew mindlessly runs around in every direction; Ninja Slayer simply howls with laughter.

"Aiieee! Aiieee! Aie..." The signal on the monitor fizzles and the image turns to TV fuzz.

"Yeeart!" Laomoto stands up like a tornado in a trailer park. Wielding both of the katana swords slung at his waist, he slices the monitor into three parts! The lavish body sushi oiran on her back felt the wrath of his nearby blade and somberly swooned.

Gripping both swords with a demonic aura, Laomoto scowled at the heavens through the tempered glass. Beyond his line of sight, a cluster of fire billowing dense smoke slowly freefell towards the Tama River.

"Ninja Slayer!"

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Chapter 05

NINJA SLAYER

Machine of Vengeance

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B-T-PF-T, B-T-PF-T, TKTKTKTKTK! B-T-PF-T, B-T-PF-T, TKTKTKTKTK!

The beatbox rhythm of low-life scum gangsta rap blares at a bowwow volume as purple haze lights cast their glare on the ocean surface. A group of jet skiers witheringly zigzag along the coast at dawn. Words written in super bold Ming-style typeface dance in the wind on the banners that they fly. Words like: 「大きな魚」 big fish, 「漁業」 fishing industry, 「横浜御縄談合」 Yokohama Ropeway Clan.

All of the riders are black skinheads; the relentless yakuza gang, the Yokohama Ropeway Klan, wearing matching stadium jackets and wielding clubs in their hands. Well, those boys sure do get up early. They're off to surround unlicensed fishing boats and put the screws to them for not paying taxes because everyone must conform and submit. If they let boats like these slide, weeds will get mixed in with the grass.

But beyond the business at hand, what happened to their clan last night was a hard dose to swallow. The massacre and pleading on their knees weighed heavily on their souls. Jermaine and Divo hadn't awoken from the ninja reality shock and were still laid up in bed. Among the nose-for-news fishermen, some might have learned of the incident. If the clan gets taken for the fool, their days are over.

Kingpin Smith thought to himself with bloodshot eyes scanning the horizon. "Any boat will do. Even one already under our protection. We got to press our point and show our gang's brutality. We'll pick a fight, surround them, and club them. If we let people mess with us, our days are numbered."

"Boss! Over there!"

"Whasdat?" Smith peered in the direction of where his henchman pointed.

A junket boat? No, a raft? Nay! Some kind of wreckage with somebody is clinging to it. A survivor?

"How do you want to handle it? It's a person."

Smith scratched his chin and thought. Then he spoke, "I smell profit."

Taking the initiative, Smith reeved his engine to full throttle. The jet ski smashed forward throwing back a massive wake and water mist.

He thought to himself. "We ain't the only ones shit out of luck. Our unsteady family needs the decisive power of a leader now." Before their very eyes in their gang's do-or-die moment, they closed in on the survivor.

Kingpin Smith parked his jet ski. Facedown and fastened to the floating wreckage, his face of the survivor was impossible to make out. Clothed in red-black rags, he resembled a vagrant and was heavily injured as well.

"Was he wrapped in a bamboo mat and thrown in the river for dead by his brethren? Did he wash out to sea from the river? What a let down." Feeling disappointed, Smith went to search the man's pockets.

But the survivor grabbed his hand. He was awake.

"Aieel?" Smith swallowed his scream. The hand that held fast to his had the strength of a bench vise. "What the fuck?"

"Where am I?" The man raised his head. His hellish stare sent chills up Smith's spine.

"Old Tokyo Bay." Consumed with fear, Smith swiftly replied.

"Take me to my back-alley doctor. Take me, now."

"Yes, sir." Smith readily replied still shaking in his boots.

The survivor had those eyes; the same fierce eyes as the demon from last night. No, actually, his eyes were a hundred times more horrific.

"Boss?" One of Smith's henchmen peered over from behind.

"Shut up! Lady luck is on our side after all!"

"Huh?"

"I said shut up. I'll fill you in later. Just do as I say!"

"Uh...sure."

Smith whispered in the survivor's ear. "I'll take you. I'm really sorry. Please let me live. Don't do it."

Smith quickly pulled up the survivor and laid him on the back of his jet ski. Then without even looking back to the boys in his gang, he zoomed off at full speed. The dumbfounded faces of the gang members reflected in his rearview mirror.

Smith thought to himself. "Holy shit. I'm done. Done with everything. What comes around goes around. Inga-oho! This is karmic retribution." Then large tears rolled down from his eyes.

Smith remained lost in thought. "I'm done. If ninjas exist then so does Buddha. Buddha has met me on my path of evil. And he's testing me with another ninja." Smith accelerated his jet ski with all his heart. "I'll go legit. I'm done with dealing illegal men-tai. I'll make good with the people I turned into junkies. So just don't do it. I can't stay in this

life. I got it. Kyoto.”

“I’ll do like he said and escort him to his doctor. Donate all my assets to a drug rehabilitation facility. Then, I’ll escape to Kyoto. Become a Buddhist. Study Zen and become a monk. I’m gonna turn my life around. I’ll make a clean break. Inga-oho! Karmic retribution here I come.”

Suffering from an outbreak of a serious case of ninja reality shock, poor Kingpin Smith was on a new kind of rampage, one driven by obsessive ideas of redemption, atonement and penance. While praying, he zoomed along in his jet ski. All of this was unbeknownst to the ninja killing Grim Reaper who rode in back.

Next episode is ...



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